

ANN LANDERS

Mom gives 900 lines no ringing endorsement

Dear Ann Landers: My most recent phone bill contained some unpleasant surprises—four calls to 900 numbers. The charges were \$4.99, \$24, \$25 and \$36. I am outraged and disgusted.

Our 14-year-old son admitted to making two calls to numbers intended for adults only. He had the numbers written on a piece of paper, with several other numbers. The \$24 call lasted just long enough for him to hear that rates were \$4 a minute. The \$4.99 call was a fraction of a minute. The \$36 and \$25 calls were not related to my son's sexual curiosity. He had made one call for information, and the other for advice.

When I shared my story with other parents, heads were nodding. These lines prey on the curiosity and immaturity of youngsters. My son never would have called if he had known how much

problem, they should call the phone company and block 900 numbers BEFORE their kids get curious. If they have a 900 number problem which cannot be solved through the phone company, they can file a complaint with the Informal Complaints & Public Inquiries Branch, Federal Communications Commission, 2025 M St., N.W., Room 6202, Washington, D.C. 20554. Make it clear that the FCC doesn't block numbers. It only handles complaints.

Thanks for providing your own special brand of mass communication outlet. You do an amazing job.—S.L., Lakewood, Calif.

Dear Lakewood: Your letter provides me with yet another opportunity to remind parents to call the telephone company and block 900 numbers NOW, before they get a bill that knocks their

visiting relatives or friends. Period.

* * *

Dear Ann Landers: Last year I gave birth to our first child, a son. My husband and I named him Parker Thomas Smith (not his real name). Parker is my father's and brother's middle name and Thomas is my husband's first name. My father was honored when we named his first grandchild after him. Sadly, Parker Thomas died the day after his birth.

We are now expecting our second son. We love the name Parker and would like to name this child Parker Edward Smith.

Would it be morbid to give this child the same first name? I don't want to take anything away from our first-born, but I do want the family name Parker to continue since it has been in

make him feel like second choice later on?

There could never be a replacement for the Parker Thomas we loved so much, but we are having a real problem thinking clearly about naming this second son. We have considered other names, but they have no family meaning. I cannot get the name Parker out of my mind. What do you advise?—Quandary in Tega Cay, S.C.

Dear Tega Cay: There is no reason you shouldn't give your second child the same name as your firstborn who died. Your father would be thrilled and obviously, you love the name, so go ahead and do it.

* * *

Gem of the Day (Credit Wilf Ray,



Photo by Jim MacBride

ARTS-MINDED—East Orange Mayor Cardell Cooper, left, joins Sen. Wynona Lipman (D-Essex), actress Ruby Dee and Philip Thomas, president of the Carter G. Woodson Foundation, at a reception honoring actor Avery Brooks at the Newark Museum. Brooks was the recipient of the Woodson Foundation's first Distinguished Artist Award.